

SEPTEMBER 1, 1964

FOIAb3b

A72

(400)

CPYRGHT

BY LUIS NOLI

PANAMA, SEPT. 1 (AP)-NINE ANTI-CASTRO COMMANDOS HAVE DESTROYED A RUSSIAN-DIRECTED RADAR STATION ON CUBA'S SOUTHEASTERN COAST, A CUBAN EXILE LEADER SAID LAST NIGHT.

MANUEL ARTIME ANNOUNCED HIS RAIDERS STRUCK FROM TWO TORPEDO BOATS AND THAT ALL GOT AWAY SAFELY.

HE SAID HE DIDN'T KNOW WHETHER ANY RUSSIANS OR CUBAN SOLDIERS WERE KILLED DURING THE RAID EARLY SUNDAY MORNING.

BUT, HE DECLARED: "WE HAVE SHOWN THAT WE CAN PULL THE TAIL OF THE RUSSIANS."

ACCORDING TO ARTIME, THE RADAR STATION WAS DEFENDED BY A GARRISON OF 150 CUBAN SOLDIERS AND THREE SOVIET OFFICERS. THE STATION WAS SELECTED, HE SAID, BECAUSE IT WAS USED TO DETECT CUBANS FLEEING THEIR COUNTRY BY BOAT, ESPECIALLY THOSE COMING FROM ORIENTE AND CAMAGUEY PROVINCES.

ARTIME ASSERTED THAT ONCE THE REFUGEES WERE SPOTTED, SPEEDY RUSSIAN-BUILT PATROL BOATS WERE SENT AFTER THEM. HE SAID THE BOATS WERE USUALLY COMMANDED BY A RUSSIAN AND THE REFUGEES WERE ALWAYS SHOT TO DEATH WHILE CROUCHING IN THEIR BOATS.

NO PRISONERS WERE EVER TAKEN, AND BODIES OF WOMEN AND CHILDREN HAVE BEEN SEEN FLOATING IN THE AREA, ARTIME DECLARED.

HE SAID THE RADAR STATION AND A LIGHTHOUSE WERE LOCATED ON CABO CRUZ, AT THE WESTERN TIP OF THE SOUTHERN COAST OF ORIENTE PROVINCE.

HIS DESCRIPTION OF THE ATTACK:

THE NINE COMMANDOS WERE ABOARD TWO TORPEDO BOATS THAT PUT OUT FROM AN UNDISCLOSED BASE IN THE CARIBBEAN AREA. HUGGING THE SHORELINE TO ESCAPE RADAR DETECTION, THE BOATS SLIPPED TO A POINT ABOUT TWO-THIRDS OF A MILE FROM THE RADAR STATION.

THE NINE COMMANDOS WENT ASHORE IN RUBBER BOATS. WHILE ONE MAN STAYED BEHIND TO GUARD THE BOATS, THE OTHERS GREPT THROUGH MANGROVE TREES TOWARD THE STATION.

A73

THREE COMMANDOS BEGAN FIRING ON A NEARBY ARMY BARRACKS WHILE THE OTHER FIVE ADVANCED ON THE STATION AND ATTACKED IT WITH RECOILLESS RIFLES.

AT THE SAME TIME, THE TWO TORPEDO BOATS BEGAN FIRING ON THE RADAR STATION AND THE BARRACKS. THE DEFENDERS REPLIED BY SWINGING ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUNS TO A HORIZONTAL POSITION AND FIRING.

THE RAIDERS RETREATED AND BOARDED THE TORPEDO BOATS ONLY AFTER THEY FELT CERTAIN THE RADAR STATION AND LIGHTHOUSE HAD BEEN DESTROYED. THE ACTION LASTED 55 MINUTES.

ARTIME SPOKE AT THE HOME OF A CUBAN FRIEND HERE IN PANAMA. HE SAID HE WAS LEAVING PANAMA FOR HIS "HEADQUARTERS" IN THE CARIBBEAN, BUT DECLINED TO SAY WHERE IT IS.

THE 33-YEAR-OLD ARTIME WAS A LEADER OF THE ABORTIVE "BAY OF PIGS" INVASION OF 1961.

HL607AED